

## RI Pre-Kindergarten Program 2011-2012 LOI Questions

1. According to the LOI, we can only allocate 3-5% of the budget to administration. If an agency has a federally approved administration allocation that is higher than the 3-5% can we charge that amount to the RIDE grant?

**Answer:** The anticipated budget breakdown outlined in the LOI is a general guide to provide applicants with a framework in which to prepare a preliminary budget. It does not prevent applicants from submitting budgets which are organized differently. However, applicants should note that cost proposal is one category in which applications will be scored. Proposals which include budgets where expenses are clearly delineated and appropriate for the operation of one high-quality Pre-K classroom will be scored higher. If a federally approved administration allocation is available, please attach a copy of the approval letter to the application.

2. Can organizations apply to operate more than one universal pre-kindergarten classroom?
  - a. If so, are separate applications required or can the multiple classroom request be submitted in a single application?

RIDE is anticipating funding 4-7 classrooms – could a specific program have more than classroom funded if it met the criteria?

**Answer:** Yes, organizations may apply to operate more than one RI Pre-Kindergarten classroom. However, while many of the elements in the Technical Proposal focus on program components, there are elements which will be different for each classroom proposed. Therefore, separate applications must be submitted for each classroom, though it is expected that some elements will be addressed in the same manner on each application.

3. Would RIDE entertain a proposal that spread the 18 students across two inclusive classrooms (9 students from the lottery and 6 students with disabilities)?

**Answer:** No. Selected grantees are expected to operate classrooms in accordance with the design recommended by the Pre-Kindergarten Design Team

(2008-2009), used during the Pre-Kindergarten Demonstration Project (2009-2011), and outlined in the 2011-2012 LOI.

4. Will programs be able to utilize the free and reduced lunch program to cover partial costs of meals/snacks?
  - b. If so, can you provide historic data on free/reduced eligibility of past program participants?

**Answer:** Yes, programs are encouraged to use the free and reduced lunch program to cover the partial costs of meals and snacks. In 2009-2010, approximately 61% of participants were eligible for free/reduced lunch. In 2010-2011, approximately 65% of participants were eligible for free/reduced lunch.

5. What promotional activities does RIDE intend to conduct for outreach and recruitment as part of its partnership with the selected sites (so that the sites can plan to conduct complementary activities)?

**Answer:** RIDE intends to issue press releases about the availability of applications for the selected PreK classrooms, to post the announcement and application on RIDE's website, and to work with local school districts to send messages through existing phone notification systems, if available.

6. Can a portion of the salaries of non-teaching personnel involved directly with the children and their families, such as a nurse, family worker, and mental health consultant, be included in the salary portion of the budget?

**Answer:** Salaries of other personnel who will be directly supporting the educational goals of the children in the PreK classroom may be included in the proposed budget for the PreK classroom.

7. Since a lottery is used for selecting children for participation, how are children with special needs assured of receiving slots?

**Answer:** The criteria for eligibility is limited to age (4 years old by September 1<sup>st</sup>) and residency (must live in the community where the program operates). Children with disabilities are neither precluded from applying nor prioritized for enrollment.

8. The Request states that awards will be given to entities that enroll children who reside in specific districts in one area of the document and then states in another area that entities included centers that operate a classroom in specific communities. If a program is located in one town, i.e. North Smithfield, but serves children from A Tier One or Two district (i.e. Woonsocket) would that entity be eligible to apply?

**Answer:** No. Classrooms must be located in the communities specified in the LOI.

9. Are the current funded Pre-K programs keeping their funding, and if so, could a newly funded program observe one of those classrooms as a mentoring opportunity?

**Answer:** Currently funded programs were selected for the Demonstration phase of the RI Pre-Kindergarten Program. The Demonstration phase ends on June 30, 2011. Therefore, currently funded programs will need to apply for funding as specified in this LOI to continue operating as a RI Pre-Kindergarten classroom.

10. The Request states that children will be randomly selected for participation through a state-supervised lottery system. Could currently enrolled families within a program be considered for this?

**Answer:** The criteria for eligibility is limited to age (4 years old by September 1<sup>st</sup>) and residency (must live in the community where the program operates). All children who meet both criteria are eligible to apply for enrollment, including families currently enrolled within a program.

11. The Request states that programs accepting DHS child care subsidy can continue to accept that for wrap around child care service beyond the 6 hour day. Can programs also charge privately for care for those parents not eligible for these services?

**Answer:** Yes.

12. For programs that have received RIDE Approval as a Comprehensive Early Childhood Program and are working on their professional development 5 year plan to bring staff up to the required qualifications, will this be considered regarding Ed. Coordinator, Teacher and Teacher Asst. qualifications?

**Answer:** As specified in the LOI, applicants must:

- Have, at the time of application, at least one staff that meets the qualifications for Education Coordinator as specified in the RIDE Comprehensive Early Childhood Education Programs Standards for Approval.
- Be able to staff each state-funded Pre-Kindergarten classroom with a teacher who meets the qualifications for teachers (Column A only) as specified in the RIDE Comprehensive Early Childhood Education Programs Standards for Approval by the program start date.

- Be able to staff each state-funded Pre-Kindergarten classroom with a teacher assistant who meets the qualifications for teacher assistants as specified in the RIDE Comprehensive Early Childhood Education Programs Standards for Approval by the program start date.

13. Can the Ed. Coordinator and the Classroom Teacher be the same person for the Pre-K classroom or do you need two separate people?

**Answer:** The administrative responsibilities and teaching responsibilities associated with operating a RI Pre-Kindergarten classroom necessitate that separate people hold these roles.

14. I note that NAEYC Accreditation is a factor in making an application more competitive. Is participation in NECPA Accreditation considered as well?

**Answer:** As stated in the LOI under Additional Competitive Factors, applicants are encouraged to demonstrate:

- Classroom quality as demonstrated by recent results of classroom quality assessments conducted in classrooms of proposed PreK teacher(s), including, but not limited to...
  - Participation in other initiatives designed to improve quality of program
- RIDE encourages applicants to provide any available evidence which speaks to the quality of the educational program.